

GAMING MACHINE WITH MULTI-DIMENSIONAL SYMBOLS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates to a gaming machine. More particularly, the invention relates to a gaming machine and to an improvement to a game played on such a gaming machine.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

[0002] Players who regularly play gaming machines quickly tire of particular games and therefore it is necessary for manufacturers of these machines to develop innovative game features which add interest to the games. In so doing, it is hoped to keep players amused and therefore willing to continue playing the game as well as to attract new players.

[0003] Also, with the growth that has occurred in the gaming machine market, there is intense competition between manufacturers to supply various existing and new venues. When selecting a supplier of gaming machines, the operator of a venue will often pay close attention to the popularity of various games with their patrons. Therefore, gaming machine manufacturers are keen to devise games which are popular with the players as a mechanism for improving sales, retaining customers and attracting new customers.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] According to the invention, there is provided a gaming machine having a display means and a game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play a game wherein at least one random event is caused to be displayed on the display means and, if a predefined winning event occurs, the machine awards a prize, the gaming machine being characterised in that the display means displays a plurality of movable carriers, each of at least certain of the carriers carrying a representation of at least one polyhedral element, each polyhedral element having a plurality of faces which are visible at any one time with an indicium being carried on each face and indicia on faces of the polyhedral elements which are visible at a rest condition of the carriers being taken into consideration in the determination of whether or not a winning event has occurred.

[0005] The display means may be a video display unit and the carriers may be video simulations of movable carriers with video simulations of the polyhedral elements thereon.

[0006] Each carrier may have more than one polyhedral element. The polyhedral elements may be spaced from each other on each carrier such that only one polyhedral element is visible at a time when the carrier is at rest.

[0007] In a preferred form of the invention the game is a spinning reel game. Hence, each carrier may be in the form of a spinning reel carrying at least one of the polyhedral elements thereon.

[0008] Each element may be fixed with respect to its associated carrier. In other words, the element may not move relative to its associated carrier. Instead, at least certain of the elements are movable with respect to their associated carriers. Then, when the reels come to rest, the elements may

rotate relative to their reels before the elements, in turn, come to rest. Each of said at least certain of the elements may be rotatable about at least two axes, an axis parallel to a direction of movement of its associated carrier (a vertical axis) and an axis transverse to the direction of movement of its associated carrier (a horizontal axis).

[0009] Each element may be displayed in a three dimensional format so that at least two faces and, preferably, at least three faces are visible. For example, a front face, a side face and a top face may be visible. It will be appreciated that, with this configuration and where all reel strip positions have polyhedral elements, the effective length of a reel strip constituting each reel is effectively trebled.

[0010] The indicia carried on the faces of the elements may be standard symbols related to the game. In addition, or instead, the indicia carried on the faces of the elements may be special symbols in respect of the game such as substitute symbols, scatter symbols, bonus symbols trigger symbols, or the like.

[0011] Each polyhedral element may be substantially cubic in shape. It will, however, be appreciated that each polyhedral element could have more than six sides.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] The invention is now described by way of example with reference to the accompanying diagrammatic drawings in which:

[0013] **FIG. 1** shows a three dimensional view of a gaming machine, in accordance with the invention;

[0014] **FIG. 2** shows a block diagram of a control circuit of the gaming machine;

[0015] **FIG. 3** shows a table of reel strips constituting reels of a spinning reel game played on the machine of **FIG. 1**;

[0016] **FIG. 4** shows a screen display of one embodiment of the game using predetermined reel stopping positions from the table of **FIG. 3**;

[0017] **FIG. 5** shows a screen display of another embodiment of the game; and

[0018] **FIG. 6** shows a flow chart of the game of **FIG. 5**.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0019] In **FIG. 1**, reference numeral **10** generally designates a gaming machine, including a game, in accordance with the invention. The machine **10** includes a console **12** having a video display unit **14** on which a game **16** is played, in use. The preferred form of a base game of the game **16** is a spinning reel game which simulates the rotation of a number of spinning reels **18**. It will, however, be appreciated that the invention is equally applicable to other types of base games such as card games or ball games such as Keno, or the like. A midtrim **20** of the machine **10** houses a bank **22** of buttons for enabling a player to play the game **16**. The midtrim **20** also houses a credit input mechanism **24** including a coin input chute **24.1** and a bill collector **24.2**.

[0020] The machine **10** includes a top box **26** on which artwork **28** is carried. The artwork **28** includes paytables, details of bonus awards, etc.